

creates the same problems.

British mad cow disease (BSE) appeared in the mid-1980s. It quickly spread from just a few animals to infect hundreds of thousands.

By 1988, this disease was linked to feeding rendered animal by-products to livestock. British cattle were consuming the remains of sheep, cattle, and other animals deemed unfit for human consumption.

Despite the British outbreak, the dangerous practice of feeding rendered meat and bonemeal to livestock has been widely practiced in the U.S., where no meaningful restrictions were even attempted until August 1997.

Today, the U.S. still allows practices that should be banned, such as feeding pigs to pigs, pigs to cattle, and

CJD also exists in the U.S., but it is unclear at what level. Most CJD here is considered "sporadic" with an unknown cause. However, the U.S. has a large population of persons with various dementia diseases, the most often diagnosed being Alzheimer's (four million cases). And studies of people in the U.S. who have died of dementia suggest much higher levels of CJD than commonly suspected.

Unlike virtually all other diseases, including AIDS, where the infectious agent can be detected in the early stages of the incubation process, doctors are unable to determine if a person is infected with TSE until right before symptoms occur.

Currently, federal agencies do not even require state health officials to report TSE cases. ■

Dear Commissioners:

Please heed this appeal.

**SUMMARY OF HFA's PETITION TO THE
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA)**

In its first petition, HFA demands that:

- Blood and blood products from all mammals, including pigs and cows, must be prohibited for use in animal feed and pet foods.
- Gelatin and gelatin by-products must not be used in animal feed, as gelatin might carry infectious agents.
- Porcine materials must not be used in animal feed because U.S. pigs are known to have exhibited symptoms of central nervous system disease suspected as being TSE and have proven susceptible to TSE in laboratory tests.
- TSE-positive material absolutely must not be fed to any animals or be used in cosmetics, fertilizer or other products.

John Markham
4/27/99

**SUMMARY OF HFA's PETITION TO THE
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)**

HFA's second petition demands that the CDC:

- Initiate a significant epidemiological investigation to determine the incidence of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies among the human population of the U.S.
- Develop an ongoing national monitoring and registry program utilizing autopsy examinations to determine any changes in the incidence of CJD-like diseases among the human population of the U.S.
- Direct all state medical officers to engage in a reporting process, similar to the reporting requirements of other infectious and transmissible diseases, to the CDC for the purpose of establishing a national cumulative database and reporting system.

cattle blood products to calves. These practices are allowed despite suggestive evidence that TSE disease may already infect pigs, cattle, and squirrels and despite the existence of proven TSEs in sheep, deer, elk, and mink.

To date, 33 human beings have died from new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (nvCJD), apparently contracted from cattle infected with BSE. How many more will die is uncertain.

Due to the long incubation period, it will be many years before the extent of the disease and deaths are determined. Estimates now range from dozens to hundreds of thousands of eventual deaths from nvCJD in Britain.

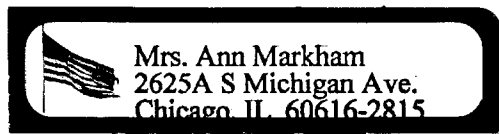
99P-0033

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Please write to the FDA. Demand that they act on the HFA petition to put an end to the practice of feeding dead pigs, horses, and other animals to other farm animals. Cows are not meat eaters by nature and they shouldn't be forced to eat dead animals. Letters should be addressed to: FDA Commissioner Jane Henney, FDA, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 14-71, Rockville, MD 20857. Refer to Docket 99P-0033/CP 1.

2. Please also write to Donna Shalala, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Ask that she immediately act on the HFA petition to initiate a nationwide program to document the incidents of CJD-like diseases. Letters should be addressed to: 200 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201. Refer to HFA vs. HHS.

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FDA Commissioner Jane Henney
FDA
5600 Fishers Lane Room 14-71
Rockville, MD 20857

